

## **Annual Report of the Environment and Energy Committee**

### **April 10, 2015**

The Environment and Energy Committee's overarching goal is to help Chevy Chase Village become a sustainable community. It aims to do this by supporting efforts to reduce the Village's overall environmental footprint through, for example, conserving energy, reducing pollution and waste, enhancing the Village's urban forest and green space, reducing noise pollution and runoff, and greening residential and Village landscaping practices. The E&E Committee seeks to raise awareness of these issues by sponsoring lectures and working with neighboring communities to share good practices. These goals and objectives are included in the Environment and Energy Committee's updated Mission Statement, which was approved by the Board in January 2015.

#### **Committee Membership**

Marilyn Bracken and Marea Hatzios Grant, Co-Chairs

Members include Valery Amiel, Oliver Davidson, Susie Eig, Amanda Jacobs,

Jonathan Lyons, Diane Pape, Betsy Stephens, Ralph Stephens, Jay Treadwell

Board Contact: Elissa Leonard

#### **Activities in 2014.**

The Environment and Energy Committee:

- Organized a Sustainable Living Lecture Series designed to inform residents about current issues of interest around the theme of sustainable communities and sustainable living.
  - The Honorable Chris Van Hollen, our representative from Maryland's 8<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, delivered the inaugural lecture. The topic was a congressional update on climate change, including a discussion of new proposed legislation introduced by the Congressman to curb CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
  - The second lecture in the series will be delivered on Thursday, April 23, 2015, by Dr. Douglas Tallamy, in partnership with The Little Falls Watershed Alliance and the Town of Somerset. Dr. Tallamy will speak on "living landscapes" and "bringing nature home," emphasizing the use of native species in creating a healthy and resilient ecosystem with multiple benefits to communities and wildlife.
- Co-sponsored an E-Recycling Event along with Village resident and Montgomery College student, Catherine Demmerle, on March 28, 2015 in an effort to expand recycling services to Village residents. This was the first electronic waste recycling event in the Village and was very successful.
- Designed with Village Staff and Board Members, a household survey on resident interest in a food waste composting facility organized by the Village. There was considerable interest among residents in such a service and in

exploring ways to fund it. The Committee will follow up with Village staff on service options to encourage greater participation among residents.

- Drafted a guidance memorandum to the Board regarding the **Montgomery County Healthy Lawns Bill 52-14**, which is currently pending before the Montgomery Council. The Bill calls for restrictions on non-essential uses of certain pesticides deemed harmful to human health and the environment. If it passes, in addition to prohibiting use of certain pesticides on lawns, the Bill will require posting of notices of applications of allowed pesticides on personal property and certain county owned properties. The E&E Committee continues to monitor the bill during the public commenting period and will keep the Board apprised.
- Participated with the Board in considering the installation of solar panels on the Village Hall during renovations to the roof planned for this year. County historic preservation requirements limit changes to the roof profile of the Village Hall, which restricts the use of solar panels. Emerging developments in photovoltaic roofing materials may make solar energy a possibility in the future.
- Continued involvement with the Village to assess the effectiveness of recycling efforts, particularly related to the use of the new (larger) recycling bins distributed to households, and impacts on contractors' access.
- Continued representation on the Western Grove Park Committee to encourage native plantings and natural landscaping. Reviewed alternative landscape plans for the Village Hall emphasizing native species, at the request of the Parks Committee.
- Collaborated with neighboring communities and organizations such as the Little Falls Watershed Alliance and Bethesda Green to identify good environmental practices which could be shared with Village residents.
- Published articles in the Crier on Recycling, Responsible Pesticide Use, Tips on Sustainable Living and Reducing Carbon Footprint at Home and at Work, in support of our Environmental Education objectives.

### **Activities and Emphasis in 2015**

During 2015, the Environment and Energy Committee has agreed to focus its efforts around the following themes:

- Education and Outreach (e.g., through the Sustainable Living Lecture Series and regular articles in the *Village Crier*)
- Energy Efficiency and Conservation
- Green Energy Alternatives
- Recycling and Compositing
- Collaboration with neighboring communities on issues of common concern
- Measuring results

#### Other Activities

- Continuing support to the Parks Committee and other Committees in areas of overlapping interest
- Reducing pollution in the Village (e.g., nutrient pollution from run-off, noise pollution, black carbon and airborne particulate matter)
- Recruiting new members

The Committee welcomes the Board's new meeting procedures as they open up the opportunity for more dialogue with residents on these and other important issues. However, to have a better understanding of the Board's goals and mission and how to support these in the context of creating a more sustainable community, the Environment and Energy Committee seeks more active engagement with the Board on emerging and cross cutting issues.

Submitted by the Environment and Energy Committee  
April 10, 2015